

The SOUTHEAST NEWS

OF, BY AND FOR CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Volume 1 - Number 6

MARCH, 1953



Pilgrim Church - Chattanooga, Tenn.

Southeast Convention Biennial Meeting Planned For May 16-17

Plans are being made for the third biennial meeting of the Southeast Convention of Congregational Christian Churches, to be held at the Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., on May 16-17.

The Program Committee has scheduled top denominational officials as speakers—Dr. Robert Cashman, Moderator of the General Council; Dr. Thos. A. Tripp, Director of the Town and Country Dept.; the Rev. Ray Gibbons, Director of the Council for Social Action; and Dr. Walter A.

Graham, national secretary of the Laymen's Fellowship.

The meeting will convene at ten o'clock on the morning of May 16 and will end with an Installation Service for the new superintendent, the Rev. Erston M. Butterfield, and the officers of the Southeast Convention and a Communion Service the afternoon of May 17.

An important matter to be considered at this meeting will be the presentation of the new
(Please turn to page 6)

WHAT THE ANNUITY FUND OFFERS THE MINISTER

by Frank J. Scribner

There is no magic about annuities. Before money can go anywhere it has to come from somewhere. Retirement income for a minister comes only from money that he has saved, or from money which has been saved on his behalf during his active years.

But while the Annuity Fund does not create income, it can be of invaluable service to those ministers who avail themselves of its offices. First, it can assist them in the accumulation of funds upon which their retirement income is based, and, second, it can distribute those funds in a way that will provide them with maximum income and maximum security for as long as they live.

Accumulating the Money

When a man joins the Annuity Fund he obligates himself to pay into the Fund a fixed percentage, usually 3%, of his salary each year. This is the first step in his savings program, but it is only the first step. The Annuity Fund urges, usually with success, his church to cooperate with him in making annual payments to his account. The recommended basis for such payments, and the basis followed by an increasing number of our churches, is 8% of the salary paid the minister. More than that, the Annuity Fund supplements the payments made by the minister and his church from the income of its endowment, the Pilgrim Memorial Fund. It invests and reinvests the money received from these three sources and accumulates the interest. When a member of the Annuity Fund comes to retirement age he has to his credit an amount which forms the basis of his annuity. In a great majority of cases his personal payments make up only a minor fraction of this amount.

The size of a member's annuity depends upon the size of this accumulated amount. It will be larger or smaller as determined by several factors. But one very important factor is the age at which a minister enrolls in the Fund. If two men receive the same salary throughout their ministry and one enrolls in the Annuity Fund at age 30 and the other at age 45, the accumulations to the first man's credit at age 65 will be roughly twice those of the second. Thus, it is of utmost importance that ministers complete their enrollment at the earliest possible date.

Returning the Money

When once the money has been accumulated the next problem is to pay it back to the member in the most efficient way. Suppose that you are 68 years old and have just retired. Suppose that you accumulated \$10,000. It must last you the rest of your life. How rapidly can you draw upon it to meet your needs? The trouble is that you do not know how long you have to

live. If you live ten years, you can use \$1,000 a year (a little more, as a matter of fact, since the unexpended balance of the \$10,000 will earn interest). But if you spend a thousand dollars a year for ten years, and then live ten years more, you will face ten years of destitution. On the other hand, if you plan your spending on the expectation of living twenty years, and die after ten years, you will have needlessly reduced your standard of living.

But there is a way of escape from this uncertainty. No one knows how long any individual man or woman will live. But we do know with a fair degree of accuracy the average length of life of a group of men and women of a given age. The Annuity Fund takes your money, pools it with the accumulations of several hundred other men, and pays you throughout your life the annual amount which would exactly use up your money, principal and interest, with the last payment before your death if your life span equalled the average for men of your age. These annual payments constitute your annuity.

Out of a group of several hundred annuitants, some will die earlier than has been forecast on the basis of averages, and some will live longer. But given a sufficient number of individuals, the long lives will balance the short lives, and the annuity payments to the long lived annuitants will be met out of the reserves released by the death of the short lived annuitants.

When you buy an annuity you sacrifice the possibility that there may be something left of your savings in the event of your early death. But in return you receive the assurance that your income will continue throughout your life and that of your wife if you live beyond the projected span.

Further Information

This, briefly, is the way the Annuity Fund operates. More detailed information is contained in the pamphlet "The Annuity Fund Questionnaire". A copy will be supplied by your Conference office, or will be sent on request by The Annuity Fund for Congregational Ministers, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

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BORN, January 29 to Prof. and Mrs. Richard Drake of Demorest, Ga., a six pound fourteen and a half ounce son, John Bryant Drake. His proud parents report that he is a model baby, and his happy little sister, Anne Elizabeth, says that his disposition is amazingly good for a strawberry blond.

Autonomy for the Southeast Convention

by Richard Drake

In their meeting last April the Board of Directors of the Board of Home Missions issued a plan for our consideration. This plan includes in it a formula whereby the Southeast Convention shall obtain complete autonomy by May 31, 1968. Is this a wise plan? Should we strive for this goal?

Some of you may raise the question, why should autonomy be sought? Is there any other area with the potential of the Southeast for American Congregationalism? Where better can the Board of Home Missions spend its funds? These, I believe, are valid questions. I shall endeavor to answer them after presenting some relative facts.

There are in our denomination forty-seven conferences which go to make up the national denomination. Our Southeast Convention has the status of a conference in the nation. Five of these conferences are in a missionary status: the German General Conference, the Intermountain District, the Central South District (Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana), the District of the Southeast (Negro), and the Southeast Convention. Each of these is aided by the Board of Home Missions in order that their budgets might be met.

How much are these conferences aided by the Board of Home Missions?

We in the Southeast Convention will operate on a budget of \$25,500 for this coming year, all of which comes from the Board of Home Missions. This figure does not include a total of about \$9,000 per year which will be sent to specific churches within the Convention. The Board of Home Missions has on its books a total of 30 such churches that it aids—11 of these churches are within the Southeast Convention, and 7 are within the state of Alabama.

The benevolent giving of our churches totaled \$11,292 for the year 1952. This money was sent to the boards and agencies which carry on the work of Our Christian World Mission and amounts to one-third the amount of our total budget.

What does this mean? Does it mean that the Board of Home Missions must continue to support us to the tune of some \$25,000 per year? Must we continue to enjoy the services of our Superintendent, Erston Butterfield, our Director of Christian Rural Extension Service, Carl Dollar, and our Director of Religious Education, Loretta Petersen, while Congregational Christians in the north continue to pay the bills? Shall eleven of our churches within the Convention continue to receive \$9,000 a year from the denomination in order that their doors may stay open?

I think not. As soon as the people of the Southeast realize that they are in fact in a mission status, they will come forth to support their own work and to pay for the services which their denomination renders them.

We used to beg off because we were too poor, but this is becoming less and less the case. In 1949, for example, the average income per person in Alabama was \$773, in Georgia it was \$876, in South Carolina \$787, in Tennessee \$873. Though this is slightly below the national average, it is hardly the condition of a poverty stricken area. We have been richly blessed; but it's hard for us to become used to the fact that now we ought to be on the giving end of this missionary business.

Why should autonomy be sought? 1) It would give us more pride in ourselves and our accomplishments. 2) It would strengthen our local churches if apportionment giving were increased, and per capita dues were enlarged in those areas where they are unnecessarily low. We talk with derision about the great and wealthy churches that spend fabulous sums upon their sanctuary, and give paltry sums to missions. But our rural churches also have too much religion "in the seat of their pants", as one of my professors used to say. Perhaps one of the troubles with us is that we don't get beyond our local congregation and realize that there are others working for God's kingdom too. And sometimes they're doing a better job than we are. 3) It would give us more freedom in the management of our own affairs.

There are no areas in Congregationalism that offer the promise for denominational expansion as great as in the Southeast, unless it would be the Central South (Texas) or the Pacific Northwest. The Board of Home Missions could find no better area in which to invest their funds than here, but the point is this: they should invest their funds in new churches, increased physical facilities for existing churches, or expansion into entirely new areas of our great region. They ought not to have to pay the bills which we ourselves should be paying. The professional personnel of the Southeast Convention should be paid for by us. It is not. Those churches receiving aid from the denomination should endeavor to "get off the dole" as soon as possible, for their own sake as well as for the sake of the denomination as a whole.

We face a great future as Congregational Christians in the Southeast. The New South needs our type of forward looking liberalism, our belief in freedom, our concern for Christian unity without dogmatic uniformity. But we will not be facing up to our opportunities until we become fully responsible for our own program.

THE SOUTHEAST NEWS

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Rev. C. Carl Dollar Director, Extension Service
Miss Loretta Petersen Director, Religious Education
Mrs. Ed. A. Albright Registrar
Rev. Henry Weaver Editor

Vol. 1 - No. 6

MARCH, 1953

Dear Readers,

You will notice, of course, that this issue of the magazine is different—larger in size and printed in larger type for easier reading. We have changed printing companies because your hard-working editor found a company in Michigan which would print our magazine at a better price, and the Board of Directors voted that we should change to this company. We hope you like the magazine in its new spring dress!

The magazine will still be mailed out from the Convention office, and we will continue to receive copy and subscriptions here . . . that is, we hope we will continue to receive both copy and subscriptions with your kind cooperation.

It has been suggested by one of our readers that something inspirational should be included in each issue. We are grateful for the suggestion and hereby open the magazine to inspirational articles from ministers—we would like to have one each month in the form of a meditation. It should fill one column of the magazine, which would be two pages typewritten, double-spaced. We would also like to have a photograph or good, clear snap-shot of each minister sending in material for the inspirational column in order that we can have a cut made to go in the column.

Please, ministers, we need your help—our readers want to hear from you and desire the inspiration of your thoughts and ideas. Don't let them and us down! Let us hear from you before March 15th so that we can begin this new feature in the April issue.

And don't forget the biennial meeting of the SOUTHEAST CONVENTION in Chattanooga on May 16-17! See you there!

The Staff

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Relief For Holland

Ten bales of clothing went out of the Service Committee's warehouse February 3 from the Re-

Piedmont College

The recent visit of the special committee of the Southeast Convention delegated to meet with the Piedmont Board of Trustees received wide publicity in the press. Certain inaccuracies appearing in those accounts make it necessary to issue this clarifying statement:

1. Erston M. Butterfield, Superintendent of the Southeast Convention, is not a member of the Board of Trustees of Piedmont College.

2. The status of the denominational appropriation to the college is as follows: (Quote from the reply to a letter of inquiry to Dr. Truman B. Douglass dated February 13, 1953) - "It is not accurate to say that the appropriation to Piedmont College has been restored. The Directors of the Board of Home Missions voted to make an appropriation to the college during the current year when and if two conditions have been met. These conditions are: (a) that the college proceed with its expressed intention of electing an official representative of the Southeast Convention to the Board of Trustees of the college; and (b) that the college re-establish satisfactory communications and understanding with the churches and ministers of the Southeast Convention."

—Erston M. Butterfield

lief and Reconstruction for the relief of the homeless people of Holland.

As a result of the recent floods, thousands of people are homeless and destitute. Food and clothing requirements are being met from other parts of Europe. The great need now is for "man-power and funds" to rebuild the devastated section of Holland. The Allocations Committee of the R. & R. has contributed \$5,000 through Church World Service.

Any contributions for relief in Holland will receive apportionment credit in the Relief and Reconstruction section of Our Christian World Mission. Money should be sent to the office of the Southeast Convention, 673 Piedmont Avenue, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia, to be forwarded to the Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

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Cross Lifting Ceremony

On Jan. 23 the Lanett Congregational Christian Church held an inspiring Cross Lifting Ceremony on the church grounds at the foot of the standing cross.

The Scripture reading was given by the Rev. Lowell A. Smoot and the Invocation by the Rev. Roy Chatham. The service was led by the pastor, the Rev. Joe A. French and the Prayer of Dedication by the Rev. John D. Dollar.

At the close of the service, the members of the Building Committee and the visiting ministers took the cross into the church and helped place it on top of the church spire.

SUPERINTENDENT'S PAGE

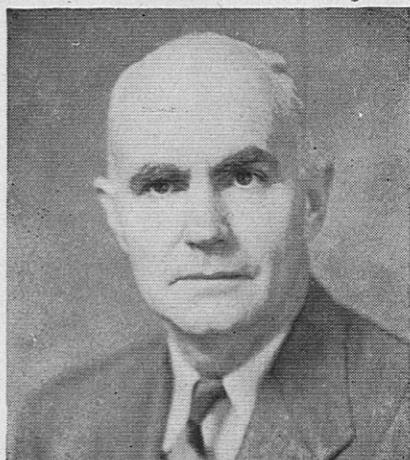
At Your Service



ERSTON M. BUTTERFIELD



LORETTA PETERSEN



REV. C. CARL DOLLAR

In my All-Church Letter in January, I promised to introduce you to the paid field and office staff of the Convention - and here we are - at your service.

Your **Superintendent** has general oversight of the total Convention program and, with the Board of Directors, is responsible for the administration of all funds allocated for Convention work by the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches. He is often called upon to represent the larger fellowship in various types of special services; from ordinations and installations to home-comings and anniversary services. Most of his time is spent traveling throughout the Convention assisting churches in matters of pastoral placement; acting as a consultant to official boards, building committees, or meeting with congregations facing special problems. He serves as staff consultant to the committees on ministry and churches and is the liaison person in all relationships between the Southeast Convention and the National Boards and Committees.

Carl Dollar has the title of **Director of the Christian Rural Extension Service**. He is at work among the churches as an assistant to the superintendent, especially within that section of Alabama around Roanoke where he has his home and office. His more specialized duties include Stewardship Training and Missionary Education; administration of the program of study for lay preachers and ministers seeking to further their education; acting as Staff Advisor to the Laymen's Fellowship on each level of our organization, and Director of the Student Summer Service program (Pastoral supply).

Loretta Petersen is **Director of Christian Education**. Anything in the realm of Christian Education and Youth Work is her primary concern. She acts as Staff Advisor to the Pilgrim Fellowship and Women's Fellowship. Beyond this she has under her care the women participants in the Student Summer Service program who come

to the area every summer to conduct Vacation Church Schools.

Mrs. Ed. A. Albright is Registrar and Assistant Treasurer of the Convention. She is the one who keeps the office running smoothly. She serves as office receptionist and secretary to the Superintendent and is in charge of all mimeographing and mailing. It is her job to receive and compile the yearly statistical reports coming from the churches and serve as scribe at all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Under the supervision of Walter L. Jackson, Convention Treasurer, she receives and disburses all funds sent in by churches for "Our Christian World Mission" and designated projects. The variety of her work is endless and most of the efficiency attributed to this office is due to her skill and willing helpfulness.

So that's who we are and what we do. The field staff is kept very busy with invitations from churches wishing special help. All represent the mutual concern and united efforts of the larger fellowship. I salute my colleagues of the staff. We are at your service!

—Erston M. Butterfield



(MRS.) MONTEZ ALBRIGHT

The Parable of Moab Hartlie



DR. BRIDGES - DR. SCRIBNER

"A Voice from the Past" tells Ronald Bridges, national chairman of the Church Building Loan Fund Campaign, why his gift to the Congregational Christian Churches Revolving Loan Fund was the best investment he ever made. Moab Hartlie, a typical Congregationalist of 1852, gave one hundred dollars to help build more churches one hundred years ago, and today, years after his death, it's still building churches.

Like Moab Hartlie, the gift you or your church gives in the Church Building Loan Fund Campaign will live on for generations. (Behind Moab's handlebar moustache is Dr. Frank Scribner, general secretary of the Ministerial Relief Division of the Board of Home Missions.)

Many of you have received a copy of this parable at the area CBLF meetings. If you would like some for your own church, please write to the Convention office and we will send them at once, as long as our supply lasts.

Committees Appointed

The Rev. Guy L. Colbert, moderator of the North Alabama Association, announces the appointment of the following committees:

Executive Committee: The Rev. Robert Shelton, Moulton; Ray Price, Garden City; and the Rev. Richard Waugh, Trinity, Ala.

Ministerial Standing: The Rev. Annie R. Campbell, Garden City, Chairman; and the Rev. Vell M. Bayne, Trinity, Ala.

Church Building Loan Fund: The Rev. Robert Shelton, chairman, Moulton, Ala.

The Rev. Vell M. Bayne is now serving four churches in the North Association—Hackleburg, Fairview; Haleyville, Union Grove; Moulton, Bethlehem; and Trinity, Friendship (Caddo).

SOUTHERN UNION COLLEGE

On January 28 the College excused classes for "Southern Union Day". Volunteer teams of faculty and students visited a series of high schools within 75 miles of Wadley. Arrangements had been made to have the teams meet with the senior classes to tell them about Southern Union. The College's representatives were cordially received and returned with encouraging reports of prospective freshmen for next Fall. Plans are now under way for an "Open House Day" when prospective freshmen will be shown the Campus, visit regular classes, get a sample of Southern Union's excellent board, inspect the dormitories, and in general be given a glimpse of what our College can offer them.

A series of Sunday appointments for representatives of the College to speak in churches of the area has been arranged. College students usually provide special music for these services, and one of the ministers on the faculty speaks on the College and brings the sermon. If you know of a church which would like to have a Southern Union representative as guest speaker, or if you know of any person who might seriously consider enrolling at Southern Union, please write to

Dean A. R. Van Cleave
Wadley, Ala.

A pleasant surprise awaits you on your next visit to the Campus when you step into our remodeled Chapel in Elder Hall. This great improvement has been made possible largely by the gifts of Women's Fellowships of our Congregational Christian Churches in Alabama.

Southeast Convention Biennial Meeting Planned For May 16-17

(From page 1)

Constitution by the Moderator, the Rev. Joe A. French, to be followed by general discussion of the Constitution and vote by the delegates.

Concurrent meetings will be held for the ministers, laymen, women and young people in the form of work-shop sessions. More detailed information regarding the program will be going out next month.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors on February 6, a Nominating Committee composed of the moderators of the present conferences and associations was appointed by the Rev. Joe A. French. This committee will be invited to meet with the Board of Directors on April 21 to prepare a slate of officers for the consideration of the delegates.

Church delegates are urged to begin now making plans to attend this important meeting. It is an opportunity for the people of the entire area to come together in fellowship and unity to make plans for progress, to receive the help and guidance of our denominational leaders, and to work toward our common purpose—the building of the Southeast Convention physically, spiritually and morally.

Church News . . .

The building program of the GARDEN CITY CHURCH is going forward with several hundred dollars already pledged to the fund. The Sunday School reports many blocks already paid for. We expect to begin digging the basement and move the church within the next few weeks. The Rev. Erston M. Butterfield, on his visit of February 7, gave us valuable ideas and much encouragement for our venture.

The Women's Fellowship met in February at the home of Mrs. Ray Price. Sixteen were present and Miss Campbell gave an inspiring review of the study book, "Accent on Liberty".

The Pilgrim Fellowship and Women's Fellowship have planned a "Tacky Party Box Supper", which promises to be a lift for our building fund.

The Pilgrim Fellowship took charge of the Sunday morning worship hour on Youth Sunday. They presented an interesting program of choral reading, music and short talks telling the history of the Christian Church. Growing out of this service was an interest in learning more about other denominations and their beliefs. They are now visiting many churches of various faiths and inviting their pastors and youth groups to tell them more about their church.

—Mrs. Ray Price

* * *

The WADLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH held its quarterly fellowship dinner in the Southern Union dining room on February 8. A business session was held following the dinner. Mrs. Dwight Hall was elected deaconess of the church. Plans were made for re-wiring and re-decorating the church building.

Since the beginning of the church year the church has held its every member canvass. It celebrated "Southern Union Day" with a service on January 11. President Clyde Flannery was the speaker, and the music for the occasion was furnished by the college choir.

The young people of the church share in a community-wide youth fellowship which includes the young people of all the churches of the community and also those from the Beulah Church of the Truett Community.

The church adopted its goal for the Building Loan Fund at its first business session last October.

—A. R. Van Cleave, pastor

* * *

The WILLIAMS CHAPEL CHURCH, Waycross, Ga., made their every member canvass on January 18 and had a very successful first canvass.

Recent improvements are gas heat in the church and Sunday School rooms, a nursery for relieving mothers during the church service, and a piano for the Sunday School rooms and young people's programs.

Plans are being made for the 20th Anniversary and home-coming day which will be May 3rd. All friends and former pastors and members are invited to be with us that day.

Mrs. C. H. Griffin

The Trosper Bible Class of the CORBIN, KY., PILGRIM CHURCH met January 31 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cummins. A delicious potluck supper was enjoyed by all.

C. B. Smith, president, presided during the business session. The group decided to sell aluminium handle paring knives and use proceeds to purchase a cover for the church organ.

Mrs. Cummins gave the devotional by reading a passage from the book of Job, with the theme, "The Marvelous Works of God". The Rev. Charles Drake spoke to the group on the individual's responsibility to the church.

Eight members were present.

—Mrs. Edward Cummins.

* * *

The OAK GROVE CHURCH took part in a religious Community Survey in cooperation with the First Methodist Church and the Betheny Baptist Church of Chipley, Ga.

A new Sunday School class for Senior High and one or two years beyond high school age has been organized with J. K. Murphy, teacher, and Delton Hoxsie, Asst.

The Primary and Beginners Department of the Sunday School has purchased new chairs. The little children are enjoying these very much.

The church yard looks very nice since the new shrubbery has been planted. New creosote post and chains have been used to make the boundaries of the church yard.

—Margie McGuire

* * *

On January 25 the NORTH HIGHLAND CHURCH, Columbus, surprised the pastor with a fellowship supper during the Young People's Hour. Friends presented him with a gold wrist watch and several other gifts. The occasion was Mr. Doherty's birthday. The puzzle was—how many candles to put on the birthday cake?

The following week the ladies of the church sponsored a supper for the benefit of the building fund, and their efforts were rewarded in the amount of \$162. Representing hard work and devoted service, \$1,500 has been raised and paid on the building fund note during the past six months.

—Mary E. Doherty

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The LANGDALE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH has purchased a good deal of equipment for a better program. The Women's Council bought a movie projector. The Sunday School added a record player and a film strip machine and bought several new tables for the kitchen.

The church reports that the fall quarter last year was the best the church has had for several years. Sunday School is up more than ten per cent. The church attendance record is better than that of the last few years and the financial situation is the best in the history of the church.

—A. Goff Bedford, pastor

Church News—

The people of the community and the members of the HEADLAND, BLACKWOOD CHURCH were saddened recently when a child was burned to death. It was the time for the pastor of the Headland Parish, the Rev. S. M. Penn, to conduct the service at the Clio, New Hope Church, but since no other ministers were available for the sad duty of conducting the funeral, Mrs. Penn, a layman and a high school student went to New Hope to conduct the worship and service for the congregation while Mr. Penn remained at Blackwood.

Dean A. R. Van Cleave, of Piedmont College, visited the parish recently and preached at Christian Hill for the evening service.

The New Hope Church has received their new hymnals which will help in building a better worship program.

The churches in the community of the New Hope Church continue to conduct prayer meetings and to study the New Testament. Meetings alternate between the New Hope Church and the Free-Will Baptist Church and members of other churches in the community.

The Blackwood Church received a letter from the Japan International Christian University Foundation expressing thanks for the gift made by the church to the establishment of ICU.

—S. M. Penn, pastor

* * *

On January 24 the ECLECTIC, UNION CHURCH held a prayer meeting of real spiritual significance. Two new members to the church were received by profession of faith by the pastor, the Rev. Otto Culpepper.

Two more members were received at the Sunday morning Service, one by profession of faith and one by letter. A baptism service was held for the three new members Sunday evening.

The Sunday School continues to grow, and new chairs have been purchased. A fund has been started to redecorate the interior of the church.

Mrs. Lilla Mae Price

* * *

The THORSBY, UNITED CHURCH has been sponsoring a Girl Scout troop, which was organized by the church pastor, the Rev. Carolyn P. Welch, last November. The young girls of Thorsby are enjoying the troop projects very much and have learned a great deal from this worthwhile activity.

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New Beatitudes for Laymen

1. Blessed is the man who greets strangers at the church.
2. Blessed is the man who first calls upon newcomers and then sends his pastor.
3. Blessed is the man who, instead of criticizing, gives thought, prayer, and energy to solving the problem.
4. Blessed is the man who puts enthusiasm into his church work.
5. Blessed is the man who does team work with his pastor.

Laymen's Fellowship

Plans are being made for the second Laymen's Retreat for Alabama laymen, to be held on June 5-7 at Southern Union College, Wadley, Alabama.

According to Herman Cook, President of the Alabama Laymen's Fellowship and member of the Board of Directors of the National Laymen's Fellowship, an interesting program is being set up. Speakers secured so far include the Rev. Erston M. Butterfield, Superintendent of the Southeast Convention, and the Rev. (Major) Logan E. Weston of Columbus, Ga.

It is anticipated that a large number of laymen will be attending this fellowship meeting.

* * *

The Phenix City Laymen's Fellowship held its monthly meeting on January 20 with fourteen members present. They chose as their new project the installation of racks on the back of the church pews for song books.

This active fellowship also had another one of those much in demand "Speak Suppers" in the form of a family fellowship supper. About forty-six persons attended.

—Paralee Hill

* * *

The Rev. W. C. Carpenter of Tifton, Ga., spoke to the Langdale Laymen's Fellowship and introduced his plan for the establishment of new Congregational Christian Churches in the Southeast Convention area. He pointed out that only as new churches are established in new communities can we hope to grow. We are losing many of our members because they move to communities where we do not have churches. Many of these people sincerely desire to stay with the Congregational Christian movement but look for leadership in the establishment of a church.

Mr. Carpenter's plan is to build an organization of a thousand members who would contribute five dollars every time a new church is established. This money would then be matched by the local group and a satisfactory building be erected. This would give the new congregation a solid start in building their new church. He mentioned Albany, Georgia, parts of the atom bomb area in South Carolina, and other south Georgia towns where such Congregational Churches might be started. At present this plan is largely limited to Georgia, but the men of the Langdale Club expressed sincere interest and several members joined the effort.

—A. Goff Bedford

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Available For You

1. Companion Pocket Crosses
2. Laymen's Fellowship Booklet
3. Laymen's Fellowship Bells
4. THE FELLOWSHIP—monthly

For information on these aids or any phase of work with men in your church, write the Office of the National Director of Laymen's Fellowship, Pembroke, Kentucky.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Southeast Convention was well represented at the Mid-Winter Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, with Mrs. Arnold Slater of Kentucky-Tennessee, Mrs. James Fraser, Georgia-South Carolina, and Mrs. Jettie Logan, Alabama-West Florida. The director of Religious Education, Loretta Petersen, and Superintendent Erston M. Butterfield also attended.

At one of the women's sessions Mrs. Logan spoke on "Our Relationship to Southern Union College." She also pointed out just where and what the Southeast Convention is.

Miss Petersen was on the program at Schaufler College and participated in the Social Action skit.

The delegates returned with renewed enthusiasm and inspiration and many new ideas for the coming year.

—Jettie Logan

* * *

The Woman's Fellowship of the Union Hill Church, Pearson, Ga., is to be congratulated on being the first woman's group in Georgia to send in a check for the Church Building Loan Fund. We hope many more societies will follow the lead of the Union Hill ladies.

From all over the state there are reports of activities in our woman's fellowship. It means much to our church to have devoted women who are busy with their homes and families give sacrificially of their time and energy.

There are many things I wish I could talk over with you, but space does not permit. However, we will have an opportunity at the Spring Rallies March 30 and 31. I am having a little difficulty arranging our Retreat, but that too will come up at our Rallies. Oh, for the day when Georgia will have a Conference Center where we can all go when we want to meet and not have to do so much juggling of plans to suit other people!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if some generous, kind-hearted person would give us a few acres of land somewhere in central Georgia where the Men's Fellowship, Woman's Fellowship and young people could have their different meetings! In case some such person is reading this, we would need a stream where the men could fish, plenty of shade trees where the women could relax and talk, and a swimming pool where the young folks could have fun. I can see it all, and am ready to pack my bag and go, if only I knew where it was. Perhaps if we all work and pray hard enough and long enough we'll have it.

This week I heard of a boy who brought home his report marked "delinquent in day-dreaming". I don't think we can be accused of such a lack.

—Mary E. Doherty

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The Oak Grove Missionary Society is not only moving along as usual, but is bending every effort to extend its program of over-all helpfulness to the church and community. One signi-



Mrs. Arnold Slater, Mrs. Margaret Hargrove, Mrs. James A. Fraser, and Mrs. Jettie Logan.

ficant feature which deserves mention is the nature of the regular monthly meeting. The Missionary Society meets jointly with the Community Home Demonstration Club, and furthermore they make a full day of it. Beginning at 10:30 A.M. until the noon hour the program is in charge of the Missionary Society. Following a covered dish luncheon, the afternoon program is in charge of the Home Demonstration Club. The two organizations share so completely and have so many things in common that, almost without exception, members of one belong to the other.

During the fall and winter the following tangible things were fostered and promoted: a delegate was elected and expenses paid to the State Conference at Tifton, a substantial amount was paid on the apportionment of the church, \$30 was given through the church treasury to be applied on the installation of gas heat, they shared in the purchase of new shrubbery for the church and parsonage grounds, and at Christmas time baskets of fruit were sent to the aged and sick people of the community.

The latest project was an "Old-fashioned Country Supper" given at the club house. The idea was to serve buffet style, allowing each person to choose to his own satisfaction, at a cost of \$1 per plate. This was spearheaded by the gift of a large turkey, which was followed by numerous other gifts. In short, there was a choice of roast turkey, chicken or baked ham with plenty of vegetables, salads and dessert. The result was a net profit of approximately \$100.

—Florence Hagler

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The ladies of the Andalusia, First Church W.M.S. held their regular meeting the night of February 1st. Mrs. Bernice Carter gave an interesting book review of "Africa, Its People, Habits and Customs". It was reported at the meeting that the piano account had been paid in full, and the ladies were happy to bring that long-term project to a close.

PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

The young people of United Church, Phenix City, organized a Youth Fellowship Group on January 18th. The name United Youth Fellowship was adopted for the group and the following officers were elected: Rudolph Starling, President; Gene Blanton, Vice President; Joyce Blanton, Secretary; and Douglas Casey, Treasurer.

This group is off to a good start. They have a good attendance thus far, and their first project was erecting a bulletin board inside the church. They assisted with the morning worship service on January 25 climaxing Youth Week.

Every other Sunday night the group has a social period after the church hour, when games and refreshments are enjoyed by all members.

In the near future they are planning to give a three act play, using youth talent, entitled "Arron Slick from Punkin Crick", and are looking forward to a visit from Miss Loretta Petersen March 1st.

—Paralee Hill

* * *

Two Sunday School Classes of United Church, Phenix City, were entertained by their teachers, Mrs. Patsy Davis and Mrs. Harry Barr, with a Valentine Party at the Phenix Recreational Building. Tamara McLemore was crowned queen by a runner-up, Carole Riddle, in the Junior Class. Judy Moss was crowned queen by Nedra Rodgers for the Intermediate Class.

Just recently Mrs. Barr carried the Intermediate Class to Idle Hour Park where they were treated to rides on the Merry-Go-Round, Bumper Cars, and Skating, after which they enjoyed lunch at the park.

—Paralee Hill

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The Young Ladies Class of the Pilgrim Church, Corbin, Ky., recently mailed a group of books to Faith Cabin Library, Augusta, Ga.

—Mrs. Edward Cummins

* * *

On February 15 the ladies served luncheon at the church and welcomed the superintendent the Rev. Butterfield, who preached the morning sermon. A special program of Dedication for the Woman's Gift was held on February 16.

At the last meeting names were drawn for "Secret Pals" who will be honored on special occasions for a period of a year. At the end of the year each will tell whose name she had, but in the meantime everyone will be guessing!

—Alfred E. Adams

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SPRING RALLIES COMING UP!

Women all over the Southeast Convention are eagerly making plans to attend the Spring Rallies. Superintendent Butterfield, Miss Loretta Petersen and the Rev. Clyde C. Flannery will speak at all the rallies, and Miss Hilde Thiem, a missionary from Micronesia, will speak at the Alabama rallies and possibly the Georgia and Kentucky-Tennessee rallies as well.

Authentic Christianity

"A Christianity that is not socially belligerent for man's welfare is not authentically Christian," according to Theodore M. Greene, professor of philosophy, Yale University. It is the intention of the Congregational Christian Churches to keep themselves "authentically Christian". To this end they established the Council for Social Action and for this purpose they support **Our Christian World Mission**.

Eighteen years is a very short time in the history of the Christian Church, but in that brief period the C.S.A. has:

1. Forged a pattern for Protestant social action which has been followed by eight major denominations, most recently by the Methodist Church in May, 1952.
2. Unfurled a banner of freedom for our churches to study and act on controversial social issues, especially in the area of racial, economic, international, and political affairs.

3. Taken the lead in a program of agricultural relations, in the analysis of national legislation at Washington, D. C.

4. Published **Social Action**, the foremost research periodical of its kind dealing with social issues.

These are but a few of the ways in which the C.S.A. has pioneered in social action.

The number of church members who make a "second mile" gift is growing in a gratifying way. Last year 385 laymen and women and 158 clergymen contributed \$7,500, and one Foundation added \$1,000. This was over 50 per cent more than the year before. This year we are seeking an increase of 100 per cent over last year.

Your generous gift will make the nineteenth year of the C.S.A. a year of great promise. We need your help very much indeed.

—Ray Gibbons, Director

* * *

The Rev. Ray Gibbons will be one of the speakers for the Southeast Convention Meeting May 16-17 at the Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga.

He will tell the ministers how the CSA is stepping up its services to the local church.

Staff members have been assigned certain states for special attention. They are meeting with state Social Action committees to help them strengthen existing local committees and to encourage the formation of new ones. The staff member agrees to spend a minimum of one week in the state and to "stand by" in whatever way he can to be helpful.

A "Tool Chest" is ready for local leaders who request it. It contains a "Tooling Up" booklet, a series of usable programs for social action committee meetings and lists of available materials.

"Christian Action in Our Time" is a new film-strip which begins at the local level, shows how to get started and how the C.S.A. helps a church to take hold of social issues.

MEDITATIONS FROM MINISTERS

"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, while it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre and seeth the stone rolled away."—John 20:1

While It Was Yet Dark

by Thomas Anderson

In the story written by the Apostle John concerning the experience following the crucifixion of Jesus he tells of the women going out to the tomb "while it was yet dark." When it seemed nothing was happening to redeem the disciples from hopelessness God was leading a little group to the sepulchre to make the discovery which was to electrify the world and set in motion the forces that were to put the course of history into new and glorious channels.

This is the great lesson of history. When it has seemed that God had withdrawn His efforts in behalf of mankind and left humanity utterly alone, He was at work to redeem them, set their feet upon the rock again and put a new song upon their lips.

When the Israelites were laboring under the pressures of Pharaoh's heartless taskmasters in the brickyards of Egypt, God was, all unknown to them, preparing to lead them out of their bondage into a new and great life. God works that way. Setting a bush afire in some unexpected time and place He attracts strong men to His service as He did on that memorable day when Moses turned aside from his shepherding to see the sight of a bush burning but not consumed.

It was very dark in Europe. When the heavens were seemingly indifferent to the people's needs a boy was born in the cottage of the slate cutter Hans Luther; in Eisleben. As a result there came that memorable day when that boy nailed his ninety-five articles on the cathedral door at Wittenberg and established "the set" of the reforms destined to redeem the continent from religious slavery and affect the lives of men and women for centuries all across the earth.

The fifteenth century in England was one of decadence, license and immorality. Religious life was dominated by the State. A little company at Scrooby withdrew from the state church and

registered protest against the abuses of their times. They fled to Holland to work through Columbus opening a new highway across the sea and that little band set forth on the Mayflower to a new world to establish a way of life that has been the wonder of the world.

God seemed indifferent to the plight of the negroes in the South. They were bought and sold as chattels. Nothing seemed to be happening in their behalf from heaven. But one day a son was born to the Thomas Lincolns in a cabin on a Kentucky mountainside. That event was God given for the redemption of a race. It occurred at a time when it was truly dark for the negro people.

When the iron heel of the Roman Empire trod upon the people of many lands hosts lost hope and turned to despair. It was very dark. But unknown to the people three wise men from the East set forth looking for a new king. In a majestic hour He, who was to be the redeemer of the race, came to illuminate forever a way out of darkness for God's earthbound children.

We have been assured that in God's own time and way those things best for mankind would come to pass. The evidence is conclusive. It is not folly for us to expect some great discovery redeeming men from hopelessness. Even now a bush may be burning on some forgotten desert; a birth may be taking place in some humble cottage; a hammer may be sounding against some cathedral door, or women may be discovering a great new reality in an empty Tomb.

No matter what your lot is, nor what the situation may be facing the world, go on steadily remembering this lesson of history. It is that God is ever at work "even while it is yet dark."

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Rev. Ira. D. Black
287 Fourth Ave.
New York 10, N. Y.

Dates To Remember:

Mar. 3 - Ministers' Association meeting in Wadley, Ala.
Mar. 8 - ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
Mar. 17 - E. Ala. Asso. officers meeting in Lanett, Ala.
Mar. 22 - PASSION SUNDAY
Mar. 23 - North Ala. Asso. Women's Rally in Birmingham, Ala.
Mar. 25 - Central Ala. Asso. Women's Rally in East Tallassee, Ala.
Mar. 27 - East Ala. Asso. Women's Rally, Noonday Church; covered dish supper.
Mar. 28 - South Ala. Asso. Women's Rally, Headland, Ala.
Mar. 29 - PALM SUNDAY
Mar. 29 - Apr. 4 - HOLY WEEK
Mar. 30 - South Ga. Asso. Women's Rally in Columbus, Ga., North Highland
Mar. 31 - North Ga. Asso. Women's Rally in Atlanta, Ga., Center Church

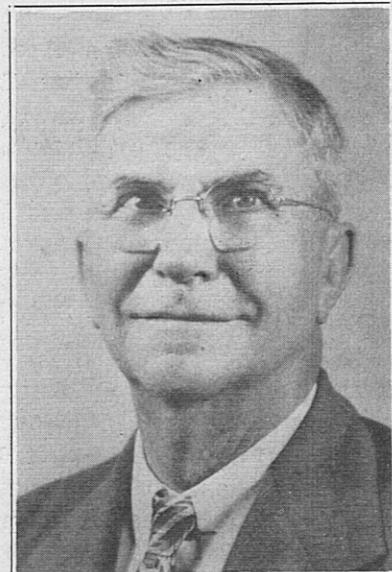
MID-WINTER MEETING IN CLEVELAND

I have been asked to write a paragraph on the Mid-Winter Meeting of the Missions Council, held in Cleveland this past January. It would be easier to write a book than to try to get the high points of this meeting in a paragraph!

The greatest thing to experience at this meeting was the strong feeling of unity or oneness which spreads over you in a flash as you enter into the meetings. (How my heart thrilled within me to have my own small voice joined in with hundreds of others from all parts of our nation and globe, to sing hymns of praise to God!) We were all one, and it was wonderful!

The second thing that impressed me was seeing all the work and knowledge that went into each program, so that the best resources were on hand to help and guide us through our problems. (How my heart thrilled to know that even with all this knowledge present, no person or problem or church, however small, was ever refused or barred from voicing its need.) Our voices were here whether we came from Barnesville, Ga., or Chicago, Ill. And our voices were lifted too. Someone said to me after the meeting that they certainly had heard a great deal about the Southeast Convention this year!

Obituary



Charles T. Lunsford died at his home January 16, and funeral services were held the following Sunday at Hackleburg Methodist Church, the Rev. J. W. Hughes officiating, assisted by the Rev. Brice and the Rev. N. E. Austin of Hamilton.

Mr. Lunsford, 67, was a prominent banker, merchant, minister, farmer and a former mayor. A lifetime resident of Marion County he was cashier of the Bank of Hackleburg. He was an ordained minister of the Congregational Christian Church, an active Mason, chairman of the Marion County Republican Committee, member of the board of aldermen, a director of the bank, and member of the National Farm Loan Assn. Board of Bankers.

Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Earlene Evans Lunsford; three sons, Charles F. Lunsford of San Francisco, Mayor James T. Lunsford of Hamilton, and Williams D. Lunsford of Hamilton; a stepson, Bill Padgett of Hackleburg, and two daughters, Mrs. Palmer Davis of Winfield and Mrs. Justus Vandiver of Hackleburg.

* * *

Mrs. Frances Tice of the United Church, Phenix City, Ala., passed away January 9, 1953.

She had been active in all phases of church work, and at the time of her death was serving as Treasurer of the Sunday School, Friendly Service Chairman of the Adult Sunday School Class, and Deaconess of the Church.